

## **Abstract**

Australian cities and communities face the looming threats of peak oil and climate change. Ways to transition cities to more sustainable systems of transport now require urgent attention. A form of transport that is highly sustainable is cycling, however the number of Australians choosing to cycle rather than drive as part of their normal daily life remains stubbornly low. While national strategies seek to double cycling participation rates between 2011 and 2016, investment in on-road infrastructure to support and encourage cycling has not been significant. Where there has been significant investment, this has sometimes resulted in division and conflict within communities.

The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the introduction of a network of on-road bike lanes into the city of Launceston. Through the analysis of in-depth interviews with sixteen key stakeholders, three key themes emerged. The first was that bike lanes can both enable and constrain cyclists. While bike lanes at the road margins can provide cyclists with a comfortable, 'legitimate' cycling space, these bike lanes can also act to position cycling as a non-mainstream form of transport. The second theme was that a technical approach reduced the focus on social processes such as communication and consultation with stakeholders. The final theme highlighted the difficulties in transitioning to more sustainable transport systems for the future. For many in the community, the focus is on more local and immediate issues, with the perception that the practice of sustainability is for others, elsewhere.

In conclusion, the transition to more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling can appear problematic, particularly with car-based travel norms such that the 'car is king'. This research has begun to address the little investigated topic of the introduction of bike lane networks. The research highlights issues and ways forward regarding transitions to forms of sustainable transport.